

Per: A E STEVENSON  
x Feb 4 Blockade  
x Ag 3-3

## Neglected Hawks

Strangely, little comment has been made about the savoir-faire with which most Americans greeted the other side of the Alsop-Bartlett report—that several high presidential advisers sought a surprise air strike at Cuban bases.

National commentators tore off unanimously after the Adlai Stevenson side of the Cuban decision review. But few stopped to question, defend, or accuse the specifically named participants in the opposite camp. Nor did those men—including Messrs. Acheson, Dillon, and McCone—feel it necessary to reply.

Admittedly the terms with which Mr. Stevenson's unnamed assailant reproached his stand were more dramatic. And admittedly the grave provocation of the Soviet missile deception may have made the surprise attack thesis seem in retrospect less far-fetched than plans for further negotiation with Moscow. But this hardly explains the lack of attention paid to what would have been an equally foolhardy policy, if carried out without

warning or chance for Mr. Khrushchev to retreat as he did.

It is, as we said yesterday, extremely unfortunate that the free-wheeling, secret discussions which went into formulation of the arms blockade-plus-mobilization were leaked. Both the "hawk" and "dove" views had to be heard in their full range from moderate to extreme if all possible plans were to be examined for effectiveness and possible military repercussions.

No intelligent planner would wish otherwise. Nor would he wish to expose either hawk or dove advocates—perhaps some of them devil's advocates—to such arrows as Mr. Stevenson has received from the William Tell-alls. But once the leak was made it becomes a major mystery that more observers did not pick critically at the flaws in the premature attack idea as they did at the flaws in the soft answer alleged to Mr. Stevenson.

We trust, though, that the public, like the President, does see clearly that the final choice taken—the open-end arms blockade—was far wiser than either extreme. If so, the subject can be closed.